University
of
Alberta

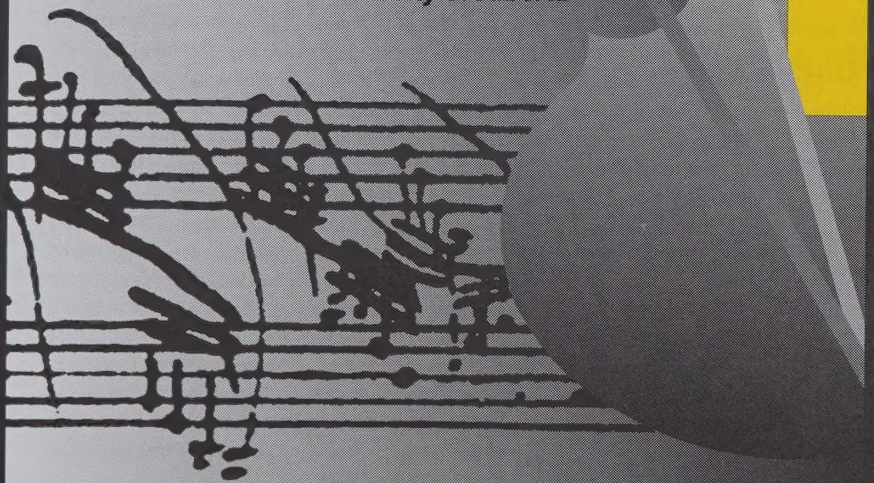
Department of Music
University of Alberta

University Symphony Orchestra

Malcolm Forsyth,
Conductor

Sunday, January 28, 2001
at 8:00 pm

Convocation Hall
Arts Building
University of Alberta



Program

MUSIC OF THE AMERICAS

Mexico

Huapango (1941) — José Pablo Moncayo (1912-1958)

Canada

The Salpinx: Concerto Grosso No. 3, for String Quartet & Orchestra (1981) — Malcolm Forsyth (b. 1936)

1 With energy
2 Tranquil
3 Scherzo: Allegro vivace

Praetorius String Quartet

Intermission

Brazil

Bachianas Brasileiras No. 2, for Orchestra (1930) — Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

1. Preludio: The Song of the Countryman
4. Toccata: The Little Train of the Brazilian Countryman

United States

Third Symphony, in One Movement (1937) — Roy Harris (1898-1979)

Program Notes

José Pablo Moncayo was born in Guadalajara and lived his short life mostly in Mexico City. He and three other young composers formed the "Grupo de los Cuatro" in 1935, with the intention of promoting a national style of serious composition which manifested itself, as in many Latin American countries, as a mixture of folkloric elements with the major neo-classical and neo-romantic styles of Europe. Moncayo enjoyed a career as conductor of the Conservatory Symphony Orchestra (later named the National Symphony Orchestra), after the retirement of Carlos Chavez, one of his mentors. He moved briefly to Veracruz, where he became acquainted with the folk-dance known as the huapango, the melodies and rhythms of which he studiously notated and transcribed for orchestra, using several percussion instruments which were normally found in the huapango bands. This work, Huapango, is his most popular composition.

The salpinx was the ancient Greek trumpet, used in battle for signalling. South African-born Forsyth's concerto grosso takes it as the title of a work which projects images of an army preparing for and waging war. Thus, the first movement is energetic and calisthenic, as if to conjure scenes of an army preparing for an engagement. Pounding timpani solos suggest the real purpose of the exercise. The second movement presents a calm nocturnal scene where tensions are nevertheless evident, and the sound of distant drums ever-present. The solo quartet plays with intensity and passion, while the orchestral sheen remains calm and unhurried. The finale is a dancing toccata led by horns blaring like the salpinx itself, as the army marches to battle. Waves of infantry appear on every side and finally the killing begins, followed by wailing laments as if it were a Greek chorus.

Villa-Lobos, born in Rio de Janeiro, wrote nine works entitled Bachianas Brasileiras, or "Brazilian Bach", for various ensembles, in which he attempted to capture the essence of the baroque suite in a uniquely Brazilian manner, of which the most famous is probably number 5, for an orchestra of cellos. In the second one, for orchestra, he used movement titles suggestive of a baroque suite, such as Preludio, Aria, Dansa and Toccata, but with appended descriptive titles relating to the Brazilian countryside. The Toccata is an apt evocation of a little train building a head of steam to ascend to its destination in the Andes.

Roy Harris was originally from Oklahoma and grew up in California. He was one of the first generation of American composers who studied with Nadia Boulanger in Paris and later put American music "on the map" in the between-the-wars era, namely Copland, Barber, Schuman, Hanson and Thompson. He wrote fourteen symphonies and much other instrumental music, including several works for band. The Third Symphony was heralded as a superior work at its premiere and it held this position for the decades thereafter. Leonard Bernstein was obviously particularly fond of it, for he performed it many times and recorded it more than once. Although subtitled "In One Movement", its form belies several clear-cut sections, which appear to give it the structure of four distinct movements, of which the first presents a joyful, hymn-like mood with cellos and violas strongly represented. The second is a series of equally joyful woodwind and brass solos over a thin wash of string arpeggios, while the third presents a strong theme which appears at first to lend itself to a fugal exposition in the brass, but in fact leads to a climactic interchange of pounding brass staccatos and a dialogue between two timpanists. Finally, the steadily beating timp carries the work to a fine, passionate and somewhat religious conclusion.

2000-2001 University Symphony Orchestra
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Violin I
Sheldon Person, Concert-master
Carolina Giesbrecht, Assistant concert-master
Monica Stabel
Lois Harder
Ken Heise
Kristin Dahle
Kim Bertsch
Ali Boyd
Cynthia Johnston
Suin Choi

Violin II
Mark van Manen*
David Colwell
Aaron Hryciw
Tabitha Chiu
David Wong
Robin Leicht
Carol Sperling
Scott Zubot

Viola
Brianne Archer*
Diane Leung
Andrea Pollock
Emma Hooper
Jeremy Tusz

Cello
Jeff Faragher*
Sarabeth Baldry
Mark Moran
Doug Millie
Hannah Wensel
Simo Eng
Chris Derksen

Bass
Toscha Turner*
Blake Eaton
Mathew Stepney
Jordan Beatty
Amanda Broda

Flute
Adam Wiebe*
Sarah Bouthillier
Cassandra Lehmann (pic)

Oboe
Shelly Foster*
Adam Garvin (english horn)

Clarinet
Mark Bass*
Heidi Piepgrass
Lindsey Cohen (Eb/Bass Cl.)

Bassoon
Ondřej Goliáš*
Joanne Carson

Horn
Dubrena Myroon*
Marino Coco
Tammy Hoyle
Jonathan Hemphill

Trumpet
Neil Barton*
Sherri Twarog
Jeremy Maitland

Trombone
Megan Hodge*
Alden Lowrey

Bass trombone
Christopher Taylor†

Tuba
Justin Litun*
Brock Campbell

Timpani
Nicholas Jacques*

Percussion
Court Laslop*
Jonathan Sharek
Ruston Vuori

*principal
†Faculty